



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA TO THE UN,
OSCE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Latvia, Ambassador Bahtijors Hasans in response to the delegation of the Russian Federation on the rights of Russian journalists in Lithuania and Latvia

Permanent Council No.1093,
Vienna, 17 March, 2016

Mr Chairman,

To clarify the issue brought up by the Russian delegation, we can confirm the information that Latvian authorities have denied entry into Latvia to Mr. Yevgeny Korolev and Ms. Yelena Timoshenko in accordance to the decision of the Minister of Interior of the Republic of Latvia.

Decisions to include foreigners in a list of persons, for whom entry to the territory of Latvia is prohibited, are based on the assessment of the activities of a particular person in each individual case and are made in accordance with national and international law. Right to grant or deny entry to its territory to certain foreign citizens is the right of every state. As far as we know also the Russian Federation makes full use of such right. There are no international legal or political commitments for any state to automatically grant entry into its territory to everyone who wishes so. I would like to emphasize that, as internationally accepted, we have the right not to comment on the reasons why certain persons are denied from entering a country.

As already stated in the Permanent Council in September 2015, the Latvian State Enterprise Register has denied the registration of representation of the news agency "Russia Today" based on national normative acts and the constitution of Latvia. There is an issue of public rather than private interests of the news agency "Russia Today". National regulations prescribe that foreign enterprises can register in Latvia if they are subjects to private law. However, the documentation received from "Russia Today" suggests that the organization operates in a public rather than private sphere. It represents the public interests of a foreign state and public sector representatives.

In regard to the question raised about Mr Graham Phillips we would like to inform that decision as such is an administrative act in the field of ensuring public order and not related to his professional activities.

Mr. Chairman,

Latvia is democratic country, where all fundamental freedoms and human rights, including freedom of movement and freedom of speech, are guaranteed to everyone. Latvia respects all of its international commitments taken up in the framework of the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the United Nations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.